

Message Text

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UNCLAS ROME 18326

1. SUMMARY: THE PERMANENT COUNCIL OF THE ITALIAN BISHOPS' CONFERENCE (CEI) ISSUED DECLARATION DEC. 13 REGARDING THE ITALIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH'S POSITION ON MARXISM AND ABORTION. IT DECLARES MARXISM AS INCOMPATIBLE WITH CHRISTIANITY AND IT PRONOUNCES A DECISIVE OPPOSITION TO THE LIBERALIZATION OF THE ABOARTION LAW.

END SUMMARY.

2. FOLLOWING IS AN INFORMAL TRANSLATION OF THE DECLARATION ISSUED BY THE PERMANENT COUNCIL OF THE CEI FOLLOWING ITS MEETINGS IN ROME DEC. 12-13 AND PUBLISHED IN "L'OSSERVATORE ROMANO" DEC. 16.

QUOTE THE PERMANENT COUNCIL OF THE ITALIAN EPISCOPAL CONFERENCE, MEETING IN ROME FOR THE AUTUMN SESSION WHILE THE HOLY YEAR COMES TO AN END, EXPRESSES THE GRATITUDE OF THE ITALIAN CHURCH TO THE HOLY FATHER FOR HIS EXTRAORDINARY TEACHING OF CHARITY AND TRUTH; NOTES WITH JOY THE EDIFICATION IN GRACE OF ALL THOSE WHO, IN SUCH LARGE NUMBER, HAVE REJUVENATED THEIR FAITH ESPECIALLY BY PILGRIMAGES TO ROME, HOPING FOR A RENEWAL OF OUR COMMUNITIES AND A MORE VIGOROUS PLEDGE OF CHRISTIAN LIFE.

BEFORE THE MARVELOUS WITNESS OF UNITY OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD, WE MUST PAINFULLY NOTE HOW, UNFORTUNATELY, THE FIT OF RECONCILIATION HAS NOT BEEN WELCOMED GENEROUSLY BY ALL. IN
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PARTICULAR WE ALLUDE TO THOSE CONTESTING GROUPS STILL FUNCTIONING WITHIN THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY WHICH, THOUGH REDUCED IN NUMBERS AND SIZE, RATHER THAN RECEIVING THE GRACE OF BROTHERLY ENCOUNTER, HAVE STIFFENED IN THEIR DISSENT. WE DON'T LIMIT

OURSELVES TO DEPOLORING THEIR FRACTURES, BUT WE RENEW OUR FRATERNITY WITH AN INVITING GESTURE, AND INVOKE FOR ALL THE GRACE OF AN OPEN AND SINCERE CONVERSION WHICH WELDS THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH, OUTSIDE OF WHICH THERE CANNOT BE CHRISTIAN LIFE OR EVANGELIC PRODUCTIVENESS.

AT THE SAME TIME WE CANNOT BUT WARN THOSE CHRISTIANS OF GOOD WILL FROM FOLLOWING THE DIVERGENT SUGGESTIONS OF THOSE WHO, PRIESTS OR LAITY, CONTINUE TO INJURE THE ORGANIC AND HIERARCHICAL COMMUNION, PLACING THEMSELVES IN THIS WAY AUTOMATICALLY OUTSIDE OF THE INDIVISIBLE CHURCH OF CHRIST.

THE GRACE OF RECONCILIATION WHICH DERIVES FROM THE EASTER MYSTERY OF THE LORD, BEYOND REVIVING THE CHURCH, ALSO TENDS TO GIVE A NEW IMAGE TO THE WORLD, PROMOTING MAN ACCORDING TO ALL THE BREADTH OF GOD'S PLAN. FOR THIS WE MUST AND WANT, BEFORE ANYTHING, TO PARTICIPATE IN THE DIFFICULT SITUATION IN OUR COUNTRY, SHARING THE SUFFERING OF THE MOST HUMBLE, OF THE POOREST, OF THE UNEMPLOYED, THOSE MOST EXPOSED TO ECONOMIC DISADVANTAGES, AND TO THE CRISIS OF MORAL VALUES.

IN THIS PROSPECTIVE, WE CANNOT WITHHOLD THE WORD OF CHRISTIAN FAITH, WHICH EVEN THOSE WHO DON'T BELIEVE IN GOD EXPECT FROM US. REAL SOCIAL JUSTICE MUST BE PURSUED WITH EVERY EFFORT AND JOINT SACRIFICE; BUT IT IS A VALUE INDIVISIBLE FROM ALL AUTHENTIC HUMAN VALUES WHICH CANNOT BE DEFENDED AND EXALTED BUT IN THEIR GLOBAL ORDER.

FOR THIS WE FEEL THE GRAVE DUTY OF CONSCIENCE, BEFORE THE PEOPLE OF GOD AND BEFORE HISTORY, TO MAKE THE FOLLOWING DECLARATION IN DEEP COMMUNION WITH THE POPE AND IN EPISCOPAL SOLIDARITY AMONG OURSELVES.

1. ONE OF THE PRINCIPAL MOTIVES OF CURRENT TENSION IN CHRISTIANITY DERIVES FROM THE INCORRECT INTERPRETATION OF RELATIONS BETWEEN FAITH AND POLITICAL PRACTICE.

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IN THE CONTRADICTIONS BETWEEN MANY IDEOLOGIES AND HISTORICAL MOVEMENTS RESULTING FROM THEM, ONLY ONE TRUE CHRISTIAN ORIGINALITY, WHICH IS AUTHENTICATED IN THE CHURCH IN THE LIGHT OF THE TEACHING OF THE PASTORS, CAN GUARANTEE THE RESPONSIBLE CONTRIBUTION OF CATHOLICS IN SUPPORT OF JUSTICE AND THE INALIENABLE RIGHTS OF RELIGIOUS AND CIVIL LIBERTY.

"THE CHRISTIAN--ACCORDING TO 'OCTOGESIMO ADVENIENS'--WHO WANTS TO LIVE HIS FAITH IN A POLITICAL ACTION UNDERSTOOD AS A SERVICE CANNOT, WITHOUT CONTRADICTING HIMSELF, GIVE HIS ADHESION TO IDEOLOGICAL SYSTEMS THAT OPPOSE THEMSELVES RADICALLY OR ON SUBSTANTIAL POINTS TO HIS FAITH AND TO HIS CONCEPT OF MAN (N. 26)."

AMONG THESE SYSTEMS, ARE CERTAINLY COUNTED THOSE WHICH ARE
INSPIRED FROM TOTALITARIAN, RADICAL AND LAY THEOLOGIES AND THOSE
THAT PROFESS A MATERIALISTIC AND ATHEIST VISION OF LIFE.
THEREFORE, INCOMPATIBLE TO THE PROFESSION OF THE CHRISTIAN
FAITH, IS THE ADHESION TO OR SUPPORT OF THOSE MOVEMENTS WHICH,
THOUGH IN DIFFERENT FORMS, ARE FOUNDED ON MARXISM WHICH,
IN OUR COUNTRY, CONTINUES TO HAVE ITS FULLEST EXPRESSION IN
COMMUNISM WHICH IS ALREADY WORKING AMONG US EVEN AT CULTURAL
AND ADMINISTRATIVE LEVELS.

EVEN IF THESE MOVEMENTS AND DOCTRINES CHAMPION WORTHY HUMAN
IDEALS AND AFFIRM TO WANT TO AFFRONT PROBLEMS OF URGENT
NECESSITY, NEVERTHELESS, SINCE THEY IGNORE THE PRIMARY VALUES
REGARDING THE INTEGRAL VISION OF MAN IN HIS HISTORY AND HIS
RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD, THEY LACK IN TRUE CREDIBILITY AND LEAD
INEVITABLY TO OTHER FORMS OF SLAVERY WHICH SEEM TO US ALREADY
PARTIALLY IN EVIDENCE IN OUR VERY COUNTRY.

ONE CANNOT BE SIMULTANEOUSLY CHRISTIAN AND MARXIST.
INSTEAD, IT IS THE HOUR OF COHERENCE, OF FIDELITY, AND OF
THAT RESPONSIBLE CHRISTIAN DISCERNMENT WHICH, IN THE MOST
IMPORTANT MOMENTS, MUST MEASURE ITSELF IN THE FAITH OF THE CHURCH.

2. IN THE CONTEXT OF A COMPLEX AND DIFFICULT SOCIAL
SITUATION, OFTEN CHARACTERIZED BY THE LOSS OF MORAL SENSE,
THE PROJECTED LAW ON ABORTION IS INSERTED.

ABORTION IS A CRIME, THE KILLING OF AN INNOCENT BEING.
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IT IS NOT LAWFUL FOR ANYONE TO KILL; NO ONE IS PERMITTED
TO DECIDE ON THE POSSIBILITY OF SUPPRESSING AN INNOCENT AND
UNDEFENDED HUMAN BEING.

CONSEQUANTLY, WE RENEW OUR PRESSING APPEAL TO LEGISLATORS
AND POLITICIANS, SO THEY WILL NOT DESIRE TO INTRODUCE INTO
ITALIAN LEGISLATION THAT GRAVE INJURY TO CORRECT MORAL CONSCIENCE
AND RESPECT FOR LIFE WHICH IS THE LIBERALIZATION OF ABORTION.

IN THE NAME OF CHRISTIANS, IN THE NAME OF HONEST ME, WE
PRONOUNCE OUR DECISIVE OPPOSITION. ONE MUST REDUCE AND
REMOVE SUCH A PAINFUL AND HUMILIATING PLAGUE NOT WITH THE
"REGULARIZATION" OF A CRIME, BUT WITH ADEQUATE SOCIAL MEASURES
IN DEFENSE OF LIFE AND WITH A MORE DECIDED EDUCATIONAL INVOLVEMENT.

WE CLOSE THIS BRIEF DECLARATION WITH A WORD OF COMFORT.
IN RECENT YEARS AND BECAUSE OF PAINFUL EXPERIENCES, THERE
HAS EMERGED A REAWAKENING OF THE CONSCIENCE OF MANY CHRISTIANS
WORKING IN PASTORAL SECTORS AND ALSO IN PUBLIC LIFE, AND THERE
HAVE ARISEN NOTABLE INITIATIVES WHICH GIVE NOURISHMENT AND
SUPPORT TO THE HOPE OF A VALID CHRISTIAN PRESENCE.

THIS PRESENCE WILL BE THE MORE EFFICACIOUS THE MORE IT
DEVELOPS IN FULL ADHESION TO THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH AND WILL
ENTER INTO SOCIAL LIFE WITH EVANGELIC COHESION AND CONVERGENCE

OF PROJECTS AND WORKS.

IN THIS HOPE, WHICH IS AN APPEAL AND A PRAYER, EVERYONE CAN
RECEIVE THE MESSAGE OF LOVE AND PEACE OF CHRISTMAS, AND
CHRISTIANS, IN THE SALVATION WHICH COMES FROM CHRIST, WILL
KNOW HOW TO SHOW THE WORLD THEIR HOPE. ROME, DECEMBER 13, 1975
UNQUOTE

3. COMMENT: THE PUBLICATION OF THE FULL DECLARATION MAY HAVE
SURPRISED SOME POLITICAL ANALYSTS. YESTERDAY, FOR EXAMPLE,
THE ANALYST OF "IL MESSAGGERO" WROTE THAT ALTHOUGH THE BISHOPS
HAD AFFIRMED CARDINAL POLETTI'S ANTI-MARXIST LINE, THE
INITIAL
STATEMENT WOULD ONLY URGE CHRISTIANS TO EXHIBIT "COHERENCE
IN ELECTORAL CHOICES". SEPTEL WILL DEAL WITH IMPLICATIONS OF
AS WELL AS POLITICAL REACTIONS TO THE DECLARATION.
END COMMENT.VOLPE

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